

Record

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King inaugurated at WCU

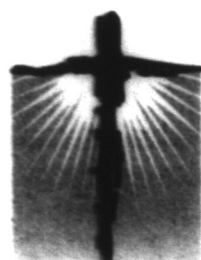
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MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

By William H. Perkins, Jr.
Editor

Raymond Thomas "Tommy" King was inaugurated April 30 as the ninth president of Baptist-affiliated William Carey University (WCU), telling the crowd gathered in the Dumas L. Smith Auditorium on the school's Hattiesburg campus, "This is a special place because lives are changed here. I can only promise you one thing: I will give you all that I have."

King is a longtime WCU faculty member who had served as acting president of the institution since the September 21, 2006, death of Larry W. Kennedy from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), commonly known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. Prior to that, he served the university for more than 22 years as executive vice president, dean of the School of Psychology and Counseling, vice-president for graduate and off-campus programs, and professor of psychology.

King was also on the adjunct faculty of the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) in Hattiesburg and maintained a private counseling practice. He was pastor of Sandy Hook Church in Marion County for 14 years, before retiring from that position in early February.

King holds a B.A. degree in Religion and Philosophy from WCU; B.D. and M.R.E. degrees from New Orleans Seminary; and M.Ed. and Ed.D. degrees from USM.

"The inauguration of Dr. King was truly an historic event in the life of William Carey University," said Stan Burton, chairman of the WCU board of trustees and a member of First Church, Ellisville. "Dr. King is the first Carey graduate to be named as its President. As only the ninth president in 100 years, he joins a small list of individuals who have shaped our Baptist university into an institution of excellence."

"Dr. King's strong faith, community involvement, amicable personality, and enthusiastic fervor for the University's progress will make Mississippi Baptists proud of their continuing support of Christian education."

The school's hometown newspaper apparently agrees. The Hattiesburg American, in a May 6 editorial, wrote, "King's ascension to the presidency of William Carey is a storied one, an example of how perseverance can take one to his or her greatest heights, including being named president of one's alma mater. His rich educational background, his teaching experience, and his volunteer work throughout the Pine Belt are bookends to an impressive resume."

King has been a member of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, and the Gulfshore Assembly Restoration Committee (following Hurricane Camille in 1969).

He was chairman of deacons at First Church, Laurel, and First Church, Columbia. He also served as chairman of the pastor search committee at First Church, Laurel, and as a member of the pastor search committee at First Church, Columbia.

King has been married for 42 years to the former Sandra Simmons, a native of Mt. Herman, La., and a WCU graduate. They have one adult son, Dave, and two grandsons. "The dignity of the inaugural ceremony was befitting William Carey University and was a tribute to the many leaders of the past who have brought William Carey through its first century," King said.

William Carey University is

King

located on three campuses. The main campus in Hattiesburg is set on 120 acres. Carey on the Coast is located in Gulfport with a scenic ocean view, but was heavily damaged by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The School of Nursing, on the campus of New Orleans Seminary, recently reopened after the seminary was heavily damaged by floodwaters brought on by Hurricane Katrina.

King can be contacted at 498 Tuscan Avenue, Hattiesburg, MS 39401. Telephone: (601) 318-6495. E-mail: pres@wmcarey.edu.

Miss. CP drops in April

Gifts to the work of the Lord through the Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP) in April saw a drop over the March total but rose in comparison to the same month the previous year, according to Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson. The April total of \$2,374,427 was \$472,013, or 16.6%, lower than the \$2,846,440 given the previous month, and \$37,535, or 1.6%, above the total given in April 2006. Total Mississippi CP giving for the current fiscal year, which runs from January-December, stands at \$11,844,397, which is \$33,604, or .28%, less than last year's giving through April, and \$781,419, or 7.1%, ahead of current budget needs. The 2007 Mississippi CP budget of \$33,188,934 was approved by messengers to the 2006 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. A total of \$2,765,745 is needed each month to meet the convention board's budget for 2007. In addition to helping support more than 10,700 missionaries in the U.S. and around the world through affiliation with the Southern Baptist Convention, Mississippi CP helps fund such programs as the State Single Adult Retreat on May 19-20 at Central Hills Retreat near Kosciusko, and the tour this summer of the Mississippi Baptist Youth Choir and Orchestra.

SBC CP rises in March

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Giving to the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program in April was \$18,562,121, \$3,571,028 or 23.8%, above giving in March of \$14,991,093, and 8.2%, or \$1,410,647, more than the \$17,151,474 received in April 2006, according to a news release from SBC Executive President and Chief Executive Officer Morris H. Chapman. As of March 31, the year-to-date total of \$120,638,766 for Cooperative Program (CP) missions is \$3,043,101, or 2.6% ahead of the \$117,595,665 received at the same point in 2006. The SBC operates on an Oct. 1-Sept. 30 fiscal year. Designated giving of \$143,114,625 for the same year-to-date period is 8.5%, or \$11,241,952, above gifts of \$131,872,673 received at this point last year. The \$25,724,070 in designated gifts received last month is \$8,752,750 above the \$16,971,320 received in April 2006, an increase of 51.6%. For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the year-to-date total of \$120,638,766 is 105.5% of the \$114,303,246 budgeted to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America. The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention. The Cooperative Program total includes receipts from individuals, churches, state conventions and fellowships for distribution according to the Cooperative Program Allocation Budget for the current fiscal year.



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2,000 years of persecution — and counting

Christians have always had it hard. That's a fact that we American Christians seem to have mostly forgotten as we enjoy our air-conditioned worship centers and cushioned pews. We seem to have forgotten that we are an exception to the 2,000-year rule of persecution of our brothers and sisters in Christ, many of whom suffer still today.

News reports from the past couple of weeks are evidence of just such persecution. Despite all protestations from the toothless United Nations and scores of civilized countries around the world, a government-sponsored pogrom against Christians continues in southern Sudan. Documented evidence describes young children being forced to watch the execution of their parents before being dragged off into slavery. Compass Direct News reports that on April 27, four Christians — an Egyptian and three Sudanese — were gunned down after leaving an evangelistic meeting in the Nuba Mountains region of Sudan. Many more Christians were injured in the attack.

Compass Direct News also reports that on April 18, three Christians at work in a religious publishing house in the Turkish province of Malatya were tied to chairs and tortured before their throats were cut almost to the point of decapitation. According to reliable sources, the men were disemboweled and emasculated in front of each other before dying.

Police arrested several of the murderers at the scene of the crime with bloody knives still in their hands, and later tracked down the ring leader who had escaped. An identical note found on each of the young Muslim assailants read, "They are attacking our religion."

It was the third such assault against Christians in Turkey in less than a year and a half. An Italian Catholic priest was shot to death while kneeling to pray in his church in the city of Trabzon, and a Turkish journalist of Armenian Christian descent was killed in Istanbul.

Compass Direct News reports that police and government officials are hesitant to prosecute or even report such crimes, for fear of reprisals.

In Iraq, where only three percent of the population is Christian, Muslim extremists have taken advantage of the postwar/civil war chaos in that country to target Christian families, according to a report from the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF).

Citing estimates that as many as 50% of Iraq's Christians have fled the country, the USCIRF report states, "These groups face widespread violence from Sunni insurgents and foreign jihadis, and they also suffer pervasive discrimination and marginalization at the hands of the national government, regional governments, and para-state militias."

According to Associated Press, a Catholic priest in the northern city of Mosul was recently kidnapped and beheaded. Of course, four Southern Baptist workers were martyred in Iraq just a few years ago and three Southern Baptist

medical personnel were shot to death in a Yemeni hospital in 2002.

These cases are truly the tip of the iceberg. From Hindu extremists' beatings of pastors in India to China's relentless pursuit of underground churches, Christians have a hard way to go.

In America, the Columbine High School killers in Colorado actively sought out Christians during their murderous shooting spree. In his videotaped rant, the Virginia Tech gunman expressed rage toward Christians, among other groups. Churches are burned in Alabama, while Christians in general are insulted and humiliated every day in the news/entertainment media.

Christians must be up to something really good these days, because Satan is surely at work in this world. There is no lack of evidence of that fact. He's the real enemy, and we overlook him at our peril. We cannot defeat him on our own, but he is beatable — and has been beaten many times — by the faithful.

We should pray, go, and support those who go. There may not be much time left, and there are still billions of souls waiting to hear the Gospel for the first time. Among those billions, there are some whose hearts have been turned toward Satan by the radical teachings of false prophets and religions. We must show them the way to have a change of heart, toward Jesus.

We must continue to resist this onslaught. We must be sure we resist as Jesus resisted, but we must resist. After what our Savior endured for us, it's the least we can do for him.

GUEST OPINION:



The Accompanist

By Bill Moak
Madison

As a music minister's child, I remember many a Saturday afternoon filled with the sounds of the hymns and specials which were for the next day's services. I remember Mom's patient accompaniment on the piano to Dad's gifted singing. The result on Sunday was nearly flawless! I have always thought it made great sense for the Lord to bring their gifts together to create a harmony that has lasted nearly 52 years. Though their years are advancing, their love and ministry are stronger than ever.

I have often thought about my Mom and her role in this ministry team. In church, or during programs, Mom will sit at her customary seat on the piano bench, quiet and dignified, while she waits to play her part. However, being an accompanist is no "second-fiddle" job. Sure, you may not notice her when all the notes are right, but even the untrained musical ear will shudder if discordant notes are played. Being a Godly wife and

mother is a lot like that. You may not even notice her in the background, but just let her leave her family to itself for even a day, and chaos will ensue!

The role of mother is affirmed many times in Scripture. God informed Mary via the angelic messenger, "Blessed are you among women..." (Luke 1:42) and Jesus reaffirmed it from the cross when He made sure His beloved mother would be taken care of (John 19:26). In this time when the roles of women in society are often under such fierce debate, Mom is out there every day quietly doing what she considers her calling — to obey God's command to submit herself to her husband, as to the Lord (Ephesians 5:22). This is no assault on her dignity or social position; it's an honor and a duty. I believe God laid it out this way to show us how to submit ourselves to God!

A teacher by profession, my Mom gave up her own income while my two brothers and I

were little. Money was scarce then, but we never wanted for any necessities. It was a wonderful, happy home, full of love and prayers. Mom and Dad both modeled for us how to be Christian parents. Her greatest gift to me was her crucial role in helping guide me to the cross.

I also remember how she was to me a pillar of strength despite being struck with life's cruelest blow — the loss of a child. Her pain on that fateful September day, when an accident took my brother, created a deep wound in her soul. Although her heart was broken, she took to her tasks as wife and mother with grace and dignity. She looked hard for some kind of answer, some reason as to why it had to happen, but never once did I hear her disrespect God or question His plan. Instead, she and my Dad learned to draw even closer to God, and today they help counsel other parents facing loss of a child.

What a testimony to faithfulness!

On this Mother's Day, we should all spend some time



reflecting on just what each of our mothers mean (or has meant) to us. The sweet accompaniment of our lives by a woman who seeks God's direction in her sacred task influences us more than we will ever know.

If your life has included a Christlike mother, give a prayer of thanks to God, for He has blessed you beyond calculation.

Thanks, Lord, for my Mom.

Moak is a member of Broadmoor Church, Madison, and president of the Better Business Bureau of Mississippi in Ridgeland. He may be contacted at president@bbbms.org.

Mass. voters may get shot at marriage law

BOSTON, Mass. (BP and local reports) — Massachusetts could be only days away from taking the next step toward overturning the state's landmark homosexual marriage law.

Legislators there are scheduled to gather May 9 for a constitutional convention where a marriage amendment is scheduled for debate. If one-fourth of legislators — that is, 50 — support it, then it will go before voters next year. If voters then approve it, homosexual marriage will become illegal in the state some four years after it officially became law.

A record 170,000 Massachusetts citizens signed petitions to qualify the amendment for legislative consideration.

Amending the constitution in Massachusetts is a lengthy, multi-year process, requiring passage by two consecutive sessions of the legislature and approval by voters. The amendment already passed once when legislators approved it with 62 votes on January 2, the final day of their session.

Senate support for the amendment has dropped some in recent months due to losses during the last election, retirements, and resignations, although it still has "57 confirmed votes," according to Kris Mineau, president of the Massachusetts Family Institute.

The fact that amendment supporters are so close to victory has homosexual marriage backers concerned, and perhaps even desperate. The Boston Globe published a story May 3 telling how two members of the homosexual group MassEquality met with Democratic National Committee officials "to make their case that a high-profile, expensive battle in Massachusetts next year would drain valuable resources away from the presidential race and its other national political efforts."

According to The Globe, MassEquality, along with Democratic Gov. Deval Patrick and state party leaders, are targeting about two dozen Democratic legislators who support the amendment. MassEquality wants the national party to pressure those same lawmakers.

"If this question makes it to the ballot, it would draw tremendous resources into a political fight in Massachusetts that otherwise would be spent on national cam-



paigns," Marc Solomon, campaign director for MassEquality, told The Globe. "Democratic donors would redirect their money here for a campaign that would be a higher priority for them."

For information about the Massachusetts marriage amendment, visit www.VoteOnMarriage.org.

Meanwhile, the U.S. House of Representatives on May 3 passed a bill to add homosexuals and transgendered individuals to the classes protected under hate crimes laws. The House voted 237-180 for the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act. The vote was largely along party lines, with 212 Democrats and 25 Republicans favoring the measure, while 166 GOP members and 14 Democrats opposed it.

Mississippi Congressmen Roger Wicker (R), Chip Pickering (R), and Gene Taylor (D) voted against the bill, while Bennie Thompson (D) voted in favor of the bill.

It appears only a veto by President Bush will prevent the bill from becoming law. The White House released a policy statement a few hours before the vote, saying senior advisors in the administration would recommend Bush veto the bill if it reaches his desk.

The U.S. Senate, which has yet to take up the bill, seems assured of having a comfortable margin for passage. The House and Senate both have passed versions in separate sessions in the past, but they have yet to agree on a measure to send to the White House.

Current hate crimes law protects traits such as race, religion, and national origin, but

the bill's opponents say the new legislation would grant protection based on lifestyle. They also say it would move federal

law toward punishing thoughts and beliefs, since the motivation of a person charged with a hate crime would have to be evaluated.

In addition, some critics warn it eventually could result in suppression of speech that describes homosexual behavior as sinful.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in Nashville, said after the House vote the legislation "could well lead to serious infringements of our First Amendment freedom of speech protections in the United States. Such legislation has had a very chilling effect on free speech in Canada,

Scandinavia and other parts of Europe. All violent crimes should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law, regardless of the motivation which drove the perpetrators to commit those crimes and regardless of the identity of the victims."

Homosexual activist organizations applauded the House vote.

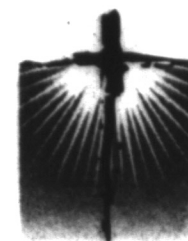
"This is a historic day that moves all Americans closer to safety from the scourge of hate violence," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese in a written release. HRC is the country's largest homosexual advocacy group.

The bill would authorize the U.S. attorney general to provide assistance to state and local officials in the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes, as well as expand the categories covered by the law to include "sexual orientation" and "gender identity," among others.

The legislation says a hate crime is one "motivated by prejudice based on the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability of the victim, or is a violation of the state, local, or tribal hate crime laws."

Pro-family organizations, including the ERLC, have been seeking to build opposition to the measure. Barrett Duke, the ERLC's vice president for public policy, signed onto an April 24 letter with 53 others asking Republicans on the House Judiciary Committee to oppose the legislation. The signers said the bill is "unnecessary, unjust, constitutionally suspect and opens the door for religiously based prosecutions."

The House bill is H.R. 1592, while the Senate version is S. 1105. Rep. John Conyers, (D. Mich.) is the House sponsor, and Sen. Edward Kennedy (D.-Mass.) is the sponsor in the Senate.



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THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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Pres. promises vetoes

WASHINGTON (BP) — President Bush promised congressional leaders on May 3 he will veto any bill that diminishes pro-life protections in federal policies. The president sent letters to both Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi "to make sure that there is no misunderstanding" of his position, Bush said. The president said he would veto any measure sent him by the Democratic-controlled Congress that "weakens current Federal policies and laws on abortion, or that encourages the destruction of human life at any stage." Bush's messages to Reid and Pelosi came after he received letters from groups of Republicans in both houses urging him to make a public commitment to veto such measures. The letters, sent Feb. 15 from 34 senators and March 30 from 155 representatives, were signed by enough members in both houses to sustain a veto. A two-thirds majority in each chamber is required to override a veto. Nancy Keenan, president of NARAL Pro-choice America, one of the country's leading abortion rights organizations, said Bush's letter "underscores the need to put a pro-choice president in the White House. That's the best way to stop these attacks on women's freedom and privacy." It is not the first time a Republican president has sent such a warning to the Democratic leadership of Congress, the GOP senators said in their February letter. Bush's father, President George H.W. Bush, sent a similar message to the Democratic-controlled Congress in June 1991.

Looking back

10 years ago

On the announcement of Promise Keepers 1997 tour, some Baptists say that the men's movement could become a possible unifying point for Southern Baptists torn asunder by more than a decade of denominational division.

20 years ago

A nine-member study committee, which includes First Church, Yazoo City pastor James Yates, recommends that the SBC "continue to relate to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs (BJCPA)," in response to a motion made at the 1986 SBC Annual Meeting to withdraw support from the BJCPA.

50 years ago

The first regularly scheduled preaching services ever conducted by a group of Southern Baptists in New York City are held at the chapel of the YMCA in downtown Manhattan.

PRAYING FOR THE CHILDREN

With Mother's Day just ahead, I was thinking about Moms, Dads, and parenting. Being a parent is a task with far reaching blessings and burdens. I am convinced the work of parents cannot be done without divine intervention. Prayer makes a difference!

Parents must be gifted jugglers. You may not be able to pick up three tennis balls and keep them in the air all at the same time, but if you are a parent, you are required to juggle dozens, if not hundreds of things at the same time. No one is excluded. Well, I take that back. I suppose a person could just opt to do nothing and be a deadbeat mom or dad, and through neglect declare, "I am not going to juggle anything!" That is not an easy road to travel either.

Just think about all of the things that step up in front of you and say, "Take care of me!" Children have needs that cover eating, sleeping, instructing, encouraging, correcting, loving, monitoring, bathing, dressing, and driving. If there are two children, multiply all that by four. Beyond the children, there are issues related to your spouse, bills, health, weather, church, school, community, things that break, flat tires, work stress, needs of other family members, taxes, and aging. You wonder why you feel old even if you are not and where you can find a little time and relaxation for yourself.

In the midst of all this, as a parent, you want a meaningful prayer life in which you can genuinely talk to the Father about the needs of your children. Of all that you do, some of it will be wisely left undone in order to find time to pray purposefully for your children.



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

I want to give you three things that I have prayed would be true for my children. I still pray that these things will be a part of their lives. Though I am past the child rearing stage and they are not at home at every meal, I still pray that these things will be a part of my children's and my grandchildren's lives.

Just by way of background, I must say that I think it is important to point your children to Jesus. I do not know how to express this other than just to say that I wanted my children to know Jesus. It was more than just a prayer. It was conversation, church, care, concern, and conviction. I wanted my children to know Jesus because I knew that life with Him would make a difference. I knew that though they might leave me, He would never leave them!

I never desired that my children find their purpose, plan, or direction for life through my teaching or influence but as they discovered the unfolding wonders of life in Christ as He guided them. That was the foundation of everything that I hoped for them as they lived, grew, and walked with the Lord.

I prayed that they would experience the joy of success. I wanted my children to know what it felt like to do some things well. Whether that joy is found in academics, sports, music, community service, or church life, they needed to

experience the delights of achievement. While not every kid can be an All-American, a first chair in the band, or a valedictorian, there are awards for participating, sportsmanship, and the spirit you display through it all. While I have been around state championship achievements, I do not believe I have ever seen the delight on a child's face like I saw one Sunday morning at church. A little buddy of mine walked up to show me a medallion he was awarded for participating in the Special Olympics. He had experienced what every child needs — the joy of success.

I prayed that my children would endure the pain of some failures. If a person does not learn to deal with life's disappointments, they will spend most of their life deeply disappointed. No one wins all of the time. No life is built out of one success on top of another. Experiencing failure can help develop the equipment, capacity, and confidence to know that failure is not the end of the world.

Our failures can be our friends. In his early years, Michael Jordan did not make the high school basketball team. Coca Cola sold less than a thousand bottles the first year it was marketed. Publishers turned James Michener down dozens of times before he got anyone to print one of his

books. I can assure you that it is not easy for a parent to see and feel the pain of the failures that a child may experience. More often than not, parents try to step in and alleviate the failures by blaming the problem on someone else or society. How we go about dealing with life's letdowns shapes what we become and shows who we are.

I continue to pray for my children and grandchildren that they will experience successes and failures in somewhat of a spread-out fashion and in a manner where they will not be crushed or controlled by either, but they will stay focused on finding God's guidance as they are enriched through both experiences.

I did not want successes to control my children or grandchildren because I have seen too many gifted, fine people ruined by success. It does not matter whether success is in the preaching, politics, medical, legal, or entertainment field. Success is an animal that too many people have welcomed into their home, and it devoured them.

On the other hand, I did not and do not want them to be devastated by disappointments to the point that the sun never rises and the birds never sing. Success or failure is not the guiding force for a person's life. Jesus is! If children grow up knowing that their successes come from Him and that He can overcome anything they face, they can become in their own right strong, productive, and effective servants of the King. As a proud father I will say, "That is my beloved child in whom I am well pleased."

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YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

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STATE CHANGES



Joyner and Parker, Hebron Church, Meridian

Hebron Church, Meridian, has called Joe Joyner as pastor and Jay Parker, minister of music and youth. Shown are Joyner and Parker.

Artesia Church, Lowndes County, has called Jeff Morgan as pastor. He comes to Artesia with his wife Shannon and children, Madison, McClain, and Carter.

Paul Leber, Sr., has retired after over 62 years in the ministry. He is available for supply or interim service, and can be reached at (601) 656-6874.

REVIVALS AND HOMECOMINGS

Concord Church, Booneville: Homecoming and Mother's Day, May 13; 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch at noon.

First Church, Ellisville: 125th Anniversary, July 1; Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; Alan Woodward, speaker.

Mt. Horeb Church, Collins: Homecoming, June 3; 10 a.m., followed by fellowship meal; Phillip Duncan, speaker; Kenny White, music.

Jupiter Church, Simpson Association: Homecoming, May 20; services, 10:45 a.m., followed by fellowship meal;

Gary Strehlow and James Shumaker, speakers.

West Shady Grove Church, Wayne County: Homecoming, June 3; 11 a.m., followed by lunch; Mitchell Smith, pastor and speaker.





2. Perry Academic Award Winners, MC



2. Hall of Fame Students, MC

1. Ross Aven, III, coordinator of student development for Mississippi College since 2004, has been named director of alumni affairs. As coordinator of student development, Aven was in charge of the intramural program, the Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi, the men's service clubs, and the student disciplinary process. He also coordinated a variety of events including Welcome Week, Family Weekend, MC Bay, and Homecoming Follies. In his new position, Aven will guide the activities and functions of the Mississippi College Alumni Association, leading outreach efforts to the university's 29,381 alumni, of which 15,128 reside in Mississippi and approximately 31 percent live in the Jackson-metro area.



Aven

2. The Mississippi College Honors Day Convocation was held April 24 in A. E. Wood Coliseum on the MC campus. Outstanding students were recognized for their academic achievements and service to the University. The Perry Academic Award recognizes scholastic achievement at Mississippi College. The gold medals are awarded to not more than seven seniors each year from various disciplines of study. Receiving this year's Perry Academic Award were (left to right): Sarah Love Carter, Henderson, Tex.; Lyssa Alaina

Taylor, Yazoo City; Mary Elizabeth Roper, Jackson; Jacob Martin Graham, Jackson; Lee Royce, president of Mississippi College; Megan Elizabeth McGuire, Clinton; Bridget Hope Foreman, Crosby; and Leah Beth Carrier, Apopka, Fla.

Four seniors are selected each year for induction into the Hall of Fame in recognition of their outstanding leadership ability, scholastic achievement, participation in extra-curricular activities and contribution to student life and dedication to the serving of God and fellow man. Selected this year (pictured left to right) are: Jacob Martin Graham, Jackson; Lyssa Alaina Taylor, Yazoo City; Lee Royce, president of Mississippi College; Mandy Sheree Huff, Monroe, La.; and Robert Samuel Followell, Meridian. The Executive Excellence Award this year was presented to Randall Crenshaw, a 1982 graduate of the MC MBA program. Crenshaw now serves as the Executive Vice President and General Manager, Enterprise for Commscope — a world leader in the design and manufacture of cable and connectivity solutions for business. Shown are Marcel Eduardo, dean of MC School of Business; Crenshaw; and Lee Royce, president of Mississippi College.

3. The MC School of Business Student Board selected Bryan Hayes as the recipient of the 2007 Outstanding Teaching Award in the School of Business. Hayes is an Associate Professor of Marketing who joined the MC School of Business faculty in 2000. Shown are Lee Royce and Hayes.

4. Clarence J. Cooper, president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and 1972 graduate of Blue Mountain College, will present the commencement address during Blue Mountain College's 134th annual commencement exercise on May 12. Graduation will take place at 10 a.m. in the Modena Lowrey Berry Auditorium. Eighty-nine students will receive degrees.

5. The 2007 edition of The Mountain Breeze, the literary journal of Blue Mountain College, was dedicated to Sherrell Settlemires, who has served as an Instructor in the Department of Language and Literature since 1987. The award winning publication features original works of poetry, plays, essays, short stories, and photographs by students, faculty, and staff. Pictured with Settlemires (center) are Anna Quinn (left), sponsor for The Mountain Breeze, and Rebecca Roper, student editor.



5. Quinn, Settlemires, and Roper, BMC



2. Crenshaw receives Executive Excellence Award, MC



3. Hayes receives Outstanding Teaching Award, MC

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx, 1932 - 2004
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UAK EWNLN NUHK LAXT
XRWS, H US XRW VPWUK
TJ OHJW; RW XRUX
ITSWXR XT SW NRUOO
AWZWP RLAYWP; UAK
RW XRUX VWOHWZWR
TA SW NRUOO AWZWP
XRHPNX.

ETRA NHB: XRHPXQ-JHZW

Clue: H = I

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Six: Thirty-Five.

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Our Heritage...



"We now bid you an affectionate good-bye; but this is God's work. He inspired, built and directed. We were simply His instruments."
Rev. L. S. Foster upon his retirement in 1903

In May, 1897 Founding Father, Rev. L. S. Foster, accepted the first child into care. To prepare for that child on that day God used innumerable individuals to provide operating dollars, food, buildings, land and encouragement for Rev. Foster as he struggled with the enormous responsibilities related to building a strong foundation for this ministry. Our legacy is one filled with God's provision through His people. The first dollar for this mission came from just such a selfless servant of our God.

"With my prayer, I enclose this dollar for the institution. If it finds company enough to effect a movement, you will hear from me again."
(The Orphanage Gem, 1893)

We did indeed hear from this donor and countless others again, allowing for quality care for thousands of Mississippi children continually for now 110 years.

"Wars, natural disasters, economic recessions and depressions have beset and sometimes devastated Mississippi society during those years, but literally, without even one day's interruption, [The Baptist Children's Village] has addressed the most basic and essential needs of countless thousands of boys and girls and their families, without fee or charge and without money support from government at any level."

Paul Nunnery, Executive Director from 1960-1990, wrote in his book, *I Heard the Children Singing, A Centennial Record of The Baptist Children's Village* p 23

The History of the BCV Mother's Day Emphasis...

"For many years Thanksgiving represented the occasion designated [by Mississippi Baptist Convention] for the annual appeal by our agency to Baptist churches in Mississippi for operating support."... Free railroad transportation provided for many of the needs in the early days... In 1967... the date for a [BCV] appeal to churches for money support each year was fixed as

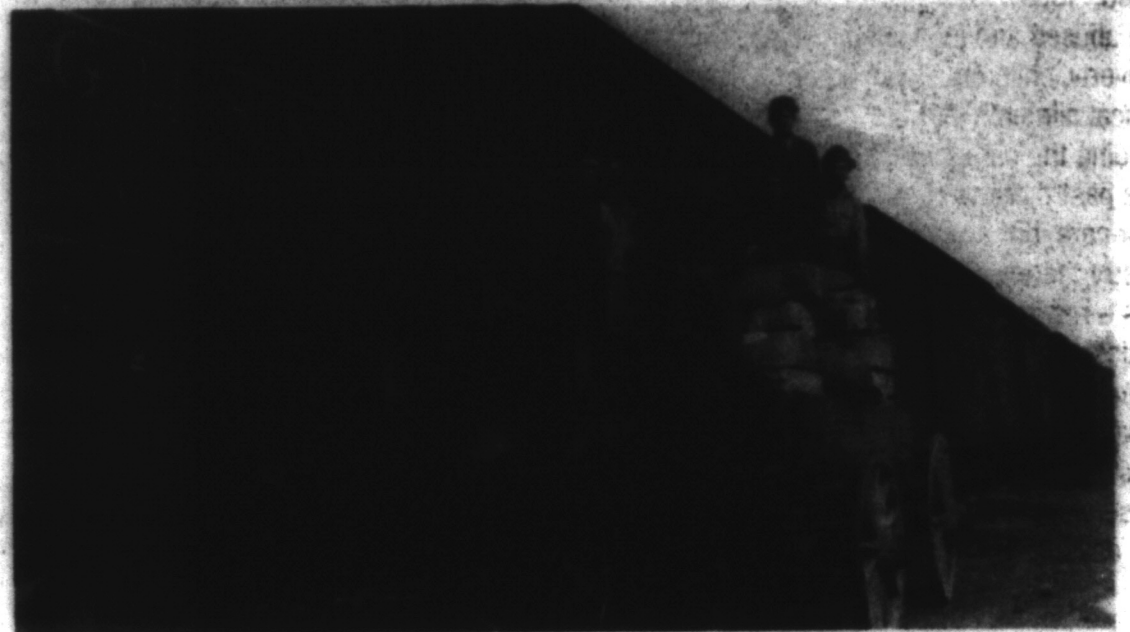
Christian Home Week, culminating on Mother's day... Christian Home Week and Mother's Day was selected by [The BCV] administration because we were so desperately attempting to convince our constituency that residential care of special children was a real, live, legitimate mission enterprise, and should, accordingly, be assigned its own period of mission emphasis, Christian homes being the thrust of our ministry and the business of our agency."

Paul Nunnery, *I Heard the Children Singing, A Centennial Record of The Baptist Children's Village* pp 51-52

God's Provision...

In-kind gifts frequently come just in time to meet very specific needs. Whether the need is for kitchen supplies for the cottages or carpenters to build houses and make repairs, there stands a servant at our door ready to provide. One early example is recorded in the January 1898 issue of *The Orphanage Gem*:

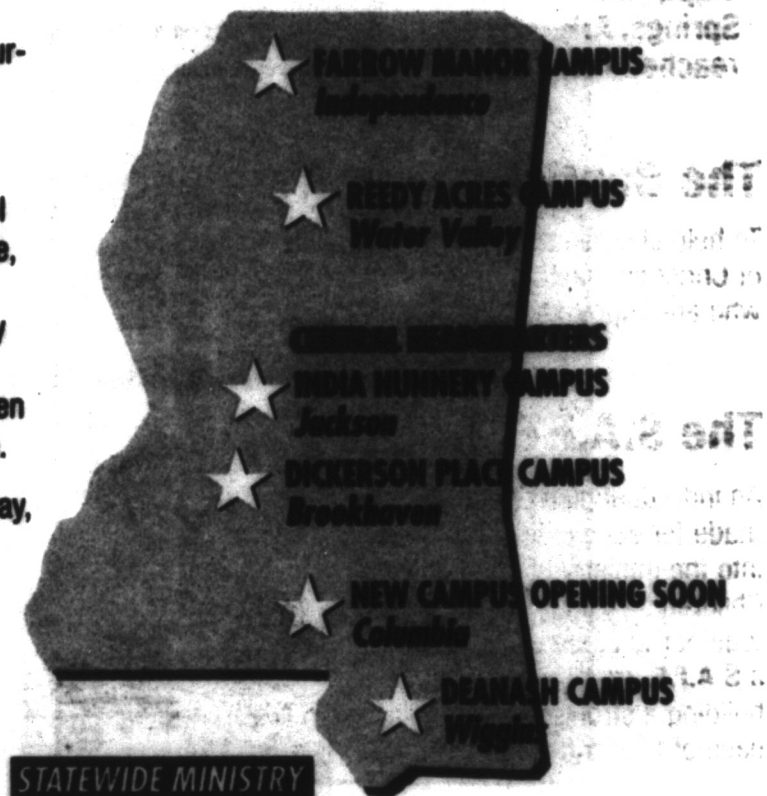
"Miss Flowers, our Governess says she almost believes there is (a fairy at the door). She never wishes for anything real hard but it is sure to come... A large ham, butter, eggs, fruits, nuts, turkey, etc. all came as we had been wishing for something to make the children glad."



"Although money was never plentiful, there was widespread participation among friends in loading freight cars which the railroads would haul free of charge during the Thanksgiving season."
Wheeler C. Cathey, Alumnus and Board Member

Facilities to accommodate the current needs of the ministry are an integral part of this statewide mission. From the first small "yellow painted house" on Capitol Street in Jackson to the statewide, multi-campus ministry of today, God has used the visions of Godly men to expand this mission to continually meet needs for children and families throughout the state.

People who encourage, work, pray, give and sacrifice fill the pages of our history. We have innumerable prayer warriors, volunteers and staff who fill the requirements laid out in this July 1902 issue of *The Orphanage Gem*.



There are so many things to be taken into consideration even among godly persons. Suitable age, health, experience, love for children, true Godliness, a ready mind to serve God in the work and not themselves, a ready mind to labor with the many trials and difficulties, a manifest purpose to labor, not for the sake of remuneration, but to serve God in their work. Surely, to obtain such suitable Godly persons, in whom these qualifications, even in some measure are found combined is not an easy matter. We are not looking for perfect fellow laborers, for persons who are without weakness, deficiencies and failings, but to secure truly suitable individuals is our wish and prayer so that the laborers may work happily together and we may go on happily in God's work with them. We want to make our boast and put our trust in the living God. We know that he guided us in this direction, and we feel confident that if we wait on him in prayer he will aid us in securing such suitable, God-fearing persons as are needed in order to work in peace and harmony and set the proper example for the children entrusted to our care.

THE BAPTIST CHILD MOTHER'S DAY 2007

Hope for thousands of children and families in Mississippi whose needs are as varied as the sands of time through which their lives have passed. Today we care for children who have been abused and neglected, children who live in poverty, children whose parent(s) have physical ailments that prevent them from providing the care their children need. In years past there were many orphaned children in our care, but even in the early days of the ministry there were families who were reunited as a result of the work of this ministry with families. Although this practice is much more common in this 21st century ministry, here is an excerpt from the September 1901 issue of *The Orphanage Gem* that illustrates the extensive services offered to families even in those early days.



W. G. Mize, Superintendent from 1936-1960, welcomes new resident.

"Since the last issue of the Gem two of our boys have left us and gone to their mother. They have been with us something over three years and have grown considerably. . . When they came to us the mother was in wretched health and destitute circumstances. We secured medical treatment, sending her to the Charity Hospital, New Orleans. She found employment, did well, and has recently married and lives at Hot Springs, Ark. Joe and John made the trip all alone to Hot Springs and reached there safely."

The Baptist Children's Village Mission...

To help children and their families fully understand and experience the healing ministry of Christ by meeting their daily needs, and inspiring them to become Christian adults who are happy, healthy and mature.

The S.A.F.E. Track

An individual plan of care is made for each child that comes into the ministry of The Baptist Children's Village. Staff work together to place every child on a S.A.F.E. Track accessing and building a strong foundation in each of four critical areas:



Spiritual needs are a priority at The Baptist Children's Village. Teaching God's Holy Word through Bible study and worship opportunities planned by our Campus Pastor, and regular church attendance at host churches combine to help our residents in their quest for God and His plan for their lives.

Academic needs for our children are significant and varied. All our children attend public schools in the community where they live. Many of them need additional tutoring or remedial reading assistance. The BCV desires to make every possible resource available to help them succeed academically.

Family continues to be a critical part of our children's lives despite their separation. In many instances it is possible for qualified, professional staff to work successfully with families and children to reunite them. Extensive efforts are made to provide a home-like, comfortable environment for all children ages 4-20 years while they are in the care of The Baptist Children's Village.

Emotional support is an important and time intensive part of The Baptist Children's Village ministry. Every staff member works to encourage children, recognizing the voids left in their lives and their deep need to be loved.

"The long and honored history of this mission ministry confirms the original intent and reaffirmed determination of the Baptists of our state to be a continuing, purposeful effort to meet the changing needs of a special group of children."

Paul Hunnery, *I Heard the Children Singing, A Centennial Record of The Baptist Children's Village* p. 81

Continue the Legacy...

One of the greatest needs of The Baptist Children's Village is for gifts that will ensure that ministry needs will be met for generations to come. A planned gift may allow you to conserve assets for your family and church and may help you reduce current and estate taxes while simultaneously continuing the legacy of The Baptist Children's Village ministry. There are several ways you can make such an investment:

Include The Baptist Children's Village in your Will. You can specify either a percentage or a specific amount which is to be awarded to The BCV ministry.

A Charitable Remainder Trust allows you to make a gift today while you continue to receive income from the gift for your lifetime with the remainder given to The BCV at your death.

A Charitable Gift Annuity allows you to make a gift today to The BCV and get income for your lifetime.

You can make The BCV the owner and beneficiary of a life insurance policy that you do not need any more, or you can purchase a new policy naming The BCV as the beneficiary.

If you would like to talk to someone about such an investment in the lives of children you may contact us at 601-922-2242 or via email at cthames@baptistchildrensvillage.com.



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"For the past 110 years God's people have provided the funds necessary to sustain The Baptist Children's Village ministry to Mississippi's children. We give thanks for today's generation who follow in the steps of previous generations as they exemplify generosity and caring."

Dr. Rory Lee, Executive Director,
The Baptist Children's Village

Yes, I would like to receive future updates and information from The Baptist Children's Village

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CHILDREN'S VILLAGE
GOAL IS \$390,000

Country pauses to observe National Day of Prayer

WASHINGTON (BP and local reports) — Americans pray to give thanks for blessings, to ask for the strength to follow God's will, to acknowledge God's sovereignty and to offer petitions, President Bush said May 3 in a White House observance of the 56th National Day of Prayer (NDP).

"We pray as families, around the dinner table, and before we go to sleep. We pray alone in silence and solitude, withdrawing from the world to focus on the eternal, spending time in personal recollection with our Creator," Bush said at the morning event.

The observance was the seventh consecutive year Bush has spoken in the White House on the National Day of Prayer. He was joined in the East Room by members of his Cabinet, members of Congress, and the military and the mayor of Blacksburg, Va., where prayer has helped sustain people in the midst of the Virginia Tech shootings.

An observance was held in a House of Representatives office building in the afternoon of May 3 with remarks from this year's NDP honorary chairman Charles Swindoll, noted author and pastor of Stonebriar Community Church in Frisco, Texas.

"In these unsafe days, You remain all powerful and able to protect," Swindoll said in a time of leading members of Congress in prayer. "In these uncertain times, You remain all knowing, leading us aright. In the unprecedented events we're facing, You remain absolutely sovereign. Our times are in Your hands. Therefore, our dependence on You is total, not partial."

The National Day of Prayer Task Force estimated that 46,000 events across the nation would occur as part of the observance, which this year was marked

with the theme America, Unite in Prayer, based on 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray, and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

Numbers of observances were held at various locations around Mississippi, including the steps of the State Capitol in downtown Jackson.

"We pray for the strength to follow God's will in our lives and for forgiveness when we fail to do so," Bush said. "Through prayer, each of us is reminded that we are fallen creatures in need of mercy, and in seeking the mercy and compassion of a loving God, we grow in mercy and compassion ourselves."

Prayer also is meant to acknowledge God's sovereignty and the need for complete dependence on Him, the president said.

"We ask His healing for those who suffer from illness, for those who struggle in life. We ask His comfort for the victims of tragedy, and that the injured may be healed and the fallen may find comfort in the arms of their Creator," Bush said. "We implore His protection for those who protect us here at home and in far away lands. We pray for the day when His peace will reign in every nation and in every land until the ends of the earth."



PRAYER FOR NATION — Cadet Chaplain Eun-Jae Yu, of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, delivers the 2007 Prayer for the Nation to President George W. Bush and guests during an observance of National Prayer Day in the White House. (BP photo courtesy of Eric Draper/The White House)

Throughout the country, people gathered at churches and public venues to pray for the nation, government leaders, media, churches, families and schools. Activities ranged from prayer breakfasts and Bible reading marathons to concerts of prayer, rallies, church prayer vigils and student flagpole gatherings.

One such prayer event was held for the 12th year at Longs Park in Lancaster, Pa., where 10,000 people were expected to attend. And in Hollywood, Calif., Christian actors, directors, producers, and others planned to gather in the CBS

studios for prayer, according to Michael Calhoun, a spokesman for the National Day of Prayer Task Force.

"At this crucial time in history, with our armed forces engaged in a desperate struggle in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, we encourage all people of faith to set aside their differences and publicly seek God's wisdom and direction for those in harm's way and for our homes, communities and country," said National Day of Prayer Chairman Shirley Dobson, wife of Focus on the Family founder James Dobson. "Our

Founding Fathers recognized the power of prayer and gathered regularly to ask for God's blessing. We can do no less."

Congress established the National Day of Prayer as a yearly event in 1952. The law was amended in 1988 to make the first Thursday of May the day of the observance.

For more information on the National Day of Prayer movement, visit www.ndptf.org.

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HATTIESBURG ANTIQUE SHOW: May 18-20th, Fri. & Sat., 10-6 and Sun., 11-4, \$6, weekend. Forrest County Multi-Purpose Center, (601) 583-7500. I-59, Exit 59 to 49 S left. Boys & Girls Club and Salvation Army to benefit. Featuring glass repair, jewelry, glass, pottery, silver, porcelain, furniture & more.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, MT. JULIET TN is now accepting resumes for the position of senior pastor. FBC averages approximately 850 in worship and is located in a rapidly growing community. E-mail resumes to Terry.Young@abbott.com or mail them to FBC, Attn: Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 226, Mount Juliet, TN 37121-0226.

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THE BAPTIST CHURCHES in Lawrence County, Alabama (Muscle Shoals Baptist Association) are currently seeking resumes for the position of Director

of Missions. The deadline for submission of resumes is May 15, 2007. Please send resumes to Muscle Shoals Baptist Association, P.O. Box 485, Moulton, AL 35650-0485.

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BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR: Hay's Creek Baptist Church, near Franklinton, Louisiana. For information contact Mr. Byrd at (601) 544-7407.

CENTER HILL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hamilton, Mississippi, is seeking a bi-vocational Minister of Music. Please send resume to Center Hill Baptist Church, Music Search Committee, P.O. Box 59, Hamilton, MS, 39746.

BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH, Forkville, Miss., is seeking a bi-vocational music director. Please send resumes to Bethlehem Baptist Church, attn: Jeff Gibbs, 3897 Clifton-Hillsboro Rd., Forest, MS 39074.

MONTICELLO BAPTIST CHURCH is accepting resumes for the position of part-time Children's Minister. All resumes should be sent to Monticello Baptist Church, PO Box 814, Monticello, MS 39654, Attention: Jon Daniels, or emailed to montbapt_jmd@bell-south.net. Deadline for submission of resumes: May 18.

Baptist associations – early models of cooperation

First in a series

By Frank Lay
Correspondent

Baptist associations in America have existed for three hundred years. However, the roots of associational life can be traced back to the New Testament and to Baptist associations in Great Britain.

One can discover examples of churches cooperating together in the New Testament. When the first Christian church at Jerusalem heard that Gentiles had received the Gospel in Antioch of Syria, they sent Barnabas to investigate and to encourage the new believers (Acts 11).

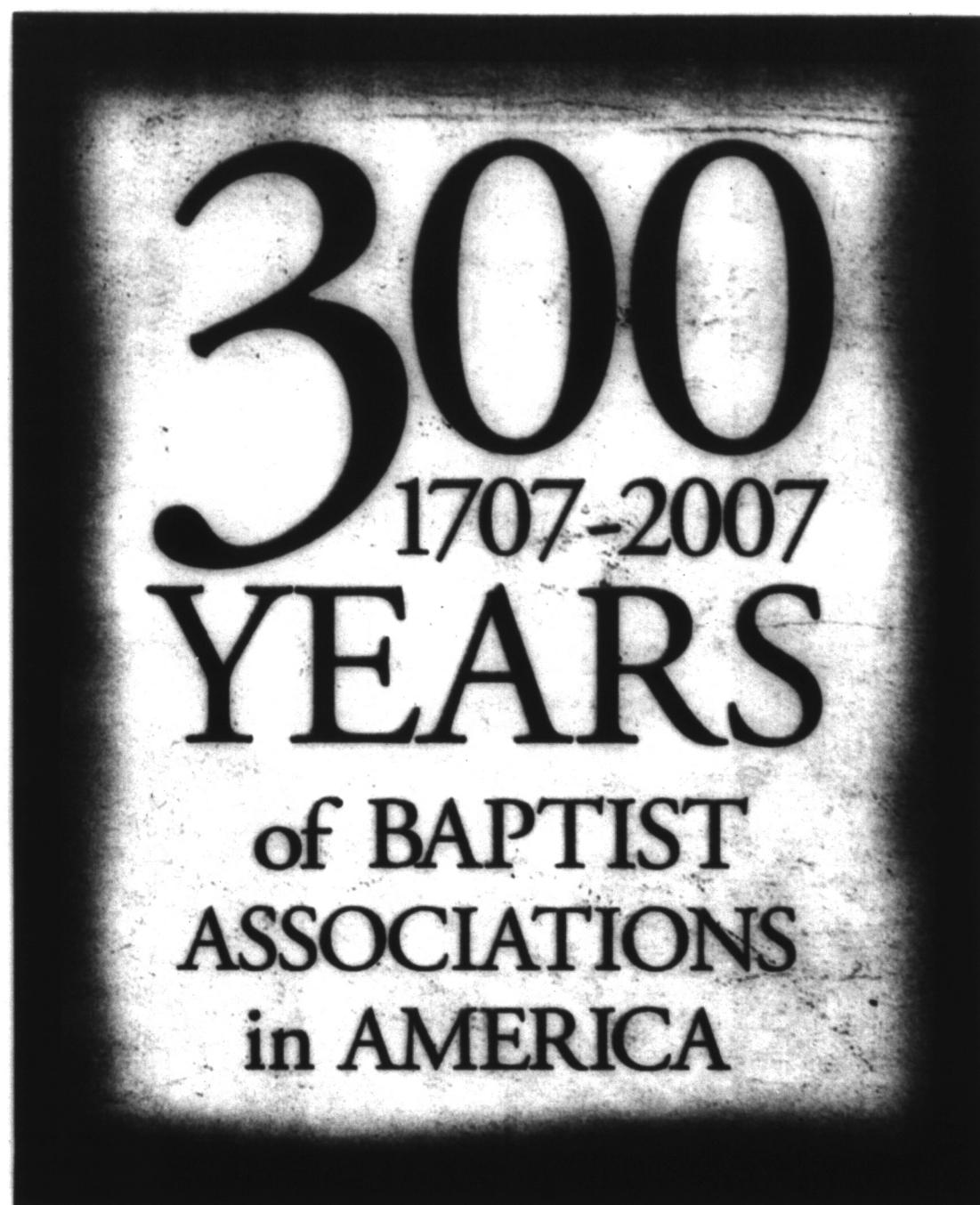
Later, the church at Antioch looked to the Jerusalem church for assistance in answering doctrinal questions. False teachers had disrupted the Antioch church by insisting that Gentile believers be circumcised according to the Law of Moses in order to be saved. The church at Antioch sent messengers to consult with the Jerusalem church regarding this issue.

After considerable discussion (Acts 15), the Jerusalem conference decreed that salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and that Gentile circumcision was not necessary for salvation.

During Paul's ministry at Ephesus, the Gospel penetrated much of Asia (see Acts 19:10). Churches were also planted at Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colossae. A careful study of Scripture reveals a connection between these four churches (see Colossians 4:14, 16). Paul wrote to the church at Colossae, "After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea" (Col. 4:16).

While the letter to the church at Laodicea has been lost, many Bible students believe that the letter to the Ephesians was actually a circular letter intended to be read by all the churches in the region.

Further examples of cooperation



among believers can be found among 17th century British Baptists. In 1624, General Baptists took the lead in organizing for fellowship and to repudiate Mennonite views with which they disagreed. However, by 1626, they sought fellowship with the Waterlander Mennonites.

In 1644, seven Particular Baptist churches, which were more Calvinistic in their doctrine, adopted a confession of faith to distinguish themselves from the Armenian theology of the General Baptists. This confession known as the First London Confession was very influential in early associations in America.

In 1651, thirty General Baptist Churches met and formed a pattern for future Baptist associational meetings. By 1655, the title "Association" became widely recognized by both General and Particular Baptists.

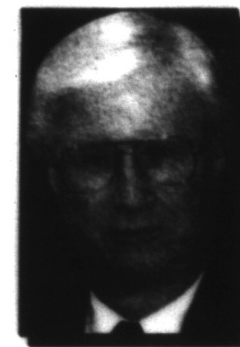
Seventeenth-century British Baptists held to three primary beliefs that carried over to associational life in America. First, they strongly believed in the priesthood of the believer. Secondly, they believed in the authority of the local church to handle its own matters. Thirdly, they believed that local church autonomy did not negate the value of cooperation.

Though each church was independent, like-minded churches were willing to cooperate with each other. Baptist historian Walter Shurden points out four unifying factors which contributed to Baptist cooperation:

- a desire to preserve the "Baptist tradition" doctrinally.
- a desire for fellowship.
- a desire for evangelism.
- a yearning by the scattered congregations to belong to the same church.

In time, Baptists from England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland began migrating to New England. In Great Britain, Baptists had shared persecution with the Puritans. However, Baptists were persecuted by the Puritans in New England. In time, many Baptists left New England and found religious freedom in the Middle Colonies.

The first Baptist association in America was organized in 1707. From there, Baptists began proclaiming the Gospel to different parts of the young nation.



Lay is associational missions director for Carroll-Montgomery Association in Winona. He may be contacted at carrmont@bellsouth.net. Next week: The first Baptist associations in America.

Analysis: 300 years of associational missions — and counting

By David Michel
Correspondent

Later this year marks the 300th anniversary of the first Baptist Association in America. It is my privilege to serve as the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's liaison officer to a corps of almost sixty Associational Missions Directors (AMD) who serve in Mississippi.

I am pleased to introduce the anniversary celebration this week in conjunction with the annual training meeting for associational officers on May 8 at Camp Garaywa in Clinton. Frank Lay, AMD for Carroll-Montgomery Association in Winona, has been enlisted to write a series of articles that will be published in *The Baptist Record* over the next several weeks, outlining the history and significance of associations.

I hope you will read and be enriched by the insights he will detail for us.

It is appropriate that we celebrate this significant anniversary with our associations. Associations were the

first denominational expression chosen by churches. Isolated congregations saw the value of combining hearts and resources to nurture fellowship and strengthen their witness. Not only was the association the first expression of denominational organization, it became the first source of assistance to congregations and the first missions performance agency.

Although today we see many expressions of church service agencies like state or national conventions, curriculum publishers, and para-church organizations, the closest source of help is still the association. Because the churches saw the wisdom in first forming associations, we are well-served today to reconsider their value and unique position in Baptist life.

Since the introduction of the Acts 1:8 Challenge, we have sought to nurture a missional renovation among associations in Mississippi. The renovation focuses on four major functions that associations are uniquely positioned to provide.

• Associations cultivate missional urgency among congregations. Jesus

reminds us that the Kingdom of God is close at hand (Mark 1:15). The association calls on churches to express their missional purpose by combining their strengths and resources for the Kingdom of God.

• Associations sharpen the focus of churches on community spiritual needs. Each congregation tends to focus on the needs of its membership, but the association reminds us of the needs of the lost and disenfranchised people around us. Recognizing our own neighborhoods and communities as personal mission fields strengthens our resolve to serve Christ, starting at home.

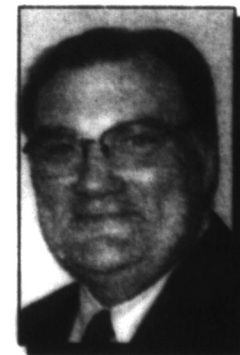
• Associations expand the capacity of churches in mission performance. For years the watchword of associationalism has been, "... doing together what we cannot do alone!" By sharing encouragement and combining leadership, associations form collaborative teams for church planting, ministry evangelism, leadership training, and mission projects beyond the scope of single congregations.

• Associations serve as missional catalysts. Because of proximity to

churches and communities, associational leaders have the best vantage point for discovering missional needs. Because churches grant associations the authority to mobilize church leaders across congregational lines, they can guide strategic missional responses to impact lostness and compound the effectiveness of individual churches.

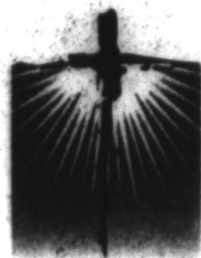
For those missional potentialities and for the rich legacy that associations bring to Baptist life, it is right for all of us to celebrate 300 years of history that really counts for the Kingdom of God.

Let the celebration begin!



Michel is associate executive director for mission strategy at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. He may be contacted at dmichel@mbcb.org.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



MISSISSIPPI BAPTISTS



1. Bible Drillers, Cairo Church, Ecu



2. Bible Drillers, Drew Church, Drew



3. Bible Drillers, Cleary Church, Rankin Association



4. Bible Drillers, Parkway Church, Houston

1. Molly Swords, Cairo Church, Ecu, ranked superior in the State Bible drills and went on to be a semifinalist in the Junior High tournament drill. Shown, front, are pastor William Dowdy, Swords, and Jim Matthews and wife; rear, Mike Hudson.

2. Drew Church, Drew, recognizes its Bible drillers who participated at First Church, Batesville. Shown are the participants and leaders.

3. Cleary Church, Rankin Association, recognizes its state children's Bible drillers. Bottom, Taylor Jones, Karlie Holmes, Megan Dusenberry, and Gracie Knight; top, Kaitlyn Atkinson, Erin Dusenberry, Tori Henry, and Aaron Holman.

4. Parkway Church, Houston, recognized its Bible drillers Apr. 29. Charles Huckaby of Parkway also placed third at the Speakers Tournament at First Church, Clinton. Shown are the participants.

5. First Church, Oxford, recognizes its Bible drillers. Back, Stephen Rayburn, John David Hankins, Austin Carter, and William Rayburn; middle, Wood Dabbs, Ryan Morgan, and David Locke; front, Emily Morgan, Emily Hankins, and Haylee Holeman.

6. Yale Street Church, Cleveland, recognizes its Bible drillers, shown at the Apr. 10 drills in Batesville. Front, Justice Lusk, Anthony Joseph, and Michael Cook; rear, Trudie Weeks, Ryan Watson, Nicole Lusk, Lindsay Watson, and Mary Kitrell.

7. Oakhurst Church, Clarksdale, recognizes its Bible drillers. Shown are the children and youth groups.

8. Crossgates Church, Brandon, is hosting Ballet Magnificat May 13, 6 p.m., in its presentation of Hiding Place. Free admission. Crossgates is also hosting Storms of Life, a grief support ministry Sundays at 11 a.m. For more information, call (601) 825-2562 or visit www.crossgates.org.



5. Bible Drillers, First Church, Oxford



6. Bible Drillers, Yale Street Church



7. Children's Bible Drillers, Oakhurst Church, Clarksdale



7. Youth Bible Drillers, Oakhurst Church, Clarksdale

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Accept Responsibility

Matthew 7:1-5; James 4:1-3,6-12

By Angie Boydston

In conflict situations, our first instinct is to blame others. We are good at identifying what is wrong in someone else's behavior. It is much easier to analyze their attitudes and behaviors than our own. Why focus on ourselves when others are so obviously wrong? Therein lies the problem in dealing with conflict; this thinking only prolongs or escalates the situation.

To be the peacemakers God intended us to be, we should evaluate ourselves first in times of conflict. We should recognize and acknowledge our actions, which might have contributed to the problem. Being accountable for our own sinful attitudes often will open the door to resolution. In this week's study, we examine how God wants us to

accept responsibility in a conflict.

We begin in Matthew 7, words from the Sermon on the Mount. Much of this sermon was a comparison of true righteousness with the kind of righteousness the Pharisees demanded. Jesus wanted us to recognize the difference is in our attitude. His concern in verses 1-5 was that we, as Christians, have the right attitude regarding the judgment of others' behavior.

In this passage, He instructs the disciples to remove any obstructions from their lives before attempting to judge others. Jesus tells them they have no right to judge others before looking at themselves first. He labeled such behavior hypocrisy.

Although it is instinctive for us to look at others first, Jesus



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calls us to be humble. He did not say to ignore or condone others' conduct. His caution is to avoid self-righteous judgment of others. Verse 5 indicates that after we have taken care of our own log, we will "see clearly to take the speck" out of a brother's eye.

Looking at ourselves first will also help us recognize the source of the conflict we face. James 4:1-3 tells us where most conflict originates — from the "cravings that are at war within." Do our own sinful desires cause wars, fights, murder and covetousness as indicated here? We usually do not recognize what the personal costs of our selfishness can be. James uses strong words to describe what happens when we fail to think of others before we strategize for our own victory.

Such self-centered thinking comes from a prideful attitude, the root cause of most conflict. In verse 6, James tells us God has promised grace to the hum-

ble. He also gives a warning that God resists the proud. Grace is a central need in conflict, and it only comes from humility. The cure for conflict is a humble spirit, which is rewarded by God's favor.

Verses 7-10 give clear directions for becoming a peacemaker in any situation. James called his readers first to repentance and submission. We are to submit to God and resist the devil. In conflict, we want the upper hand. Selfishly, we rationalize our actions and apply the world's standards to the situation. Submitting to the Lord's control, in contrast, means we apply God's standard, putting others first.

James also encourages his listeners to draw near to God. Being in close communion with the Father will assure us consistent victory over conflict. This contact with God leads to conviction and repentance.

To draw near to God demands His cleansing. James says in verse 8 that we must cleanse our hands. The symbolism here is from the Old Testament when Priests washed their hands before they

approached God in the tabernacle. This ceremonial cleansing prepares us to repent our wrongs against others and against the Lord. Verse 9 commands us to be miserable and mourn over our own wrongdoings.

The key factor in dealing with conflict is a willingness to humble ourselves as verse 10 says. The Lord will exalt us if we truly put others first. He will use us to glorify Himself. When we are able to make little of ourselves, God can make much of us.

We are left with a warning in verses 11 and 12. James admonishes Christians who set themselves up as judges, assuming a position that belongs only to God. Judging someone else comes from a prideful belief that we have a clear right to do so.

If we submit to God in humility, we accept responsibility for our part in a conflict. God offers us His grace and rewards us with His favor. Soon we will be on the way to becoming the peacemaker He wants us to be.

Boydston is Preschool and Children's consultant in the Sunday School Dept., MBCB.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

God's Word Is Essential

2 Peter 1:12-21

By Ivan Parke

The Bible contains spoken and written farewells, final words before death. For example, Genesis 49 and 1 Kings 2:1-9 record dying fathers addressing their sons. 2 Timothy and 2 Peter are letters from apostles anticipating their executions. Paul divulged, "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come" (2 Tim. 4:6). Peter revealed, "The laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent" (1:14).

Last words can be lasting words. The speaker or writer, knowing that little time remains, carefully weighs each word. The hearer or reader, knowing that little time remains, pays closer attention.

1. We cannot heed what we do not remember.

A "therefore" begins verse 12, connecting the two halves

(vv. 1-11 and 12-21) of chapter one.

In verses 12-15, Peter targeted the long-term memory of his readers: note the verb "to remind" (v. 12), noun "reminder" (v. 13; see also 3:1-2), and noun "remembrance" (v. 15B KJV). They already knew (short-term memory) what he called "these things" (vv. 12, 15), a specific reference to each "truth" (v. 12) in verses 1-11. They had been "established" (v. 12) in sound teaching. The Greek verb, translated "establish," also means "strengthen," "set," or "fix." Nevertheless, knowledge of the truth can be forgotten (e.g., 1:9). When the Jewish authorities had arrested Jesus, Peter suffered amnesia: "I do not know the man! - And immediately a cock crowed. And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said" (Mt. 26:74-75).

In verses 13-15, the tone is not morbid, even though Peter dis-



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cussed his "imminent" death: see "laying aside" (v. 14) and "departure" (v. 15). Years earlier, the resurrected Jesus had informed him how he would die: an aged martyr (v. 14; Jn. 21:18-19). Now, an "elder" (1 Pet. 5:1), Peter realized that he had fewer opportunities to travel afar, limited time to write letters. His readers, therefore, needed to retain the truth (long-term memory), not just comprehend it (short-term memory). Soon, he would die, ending his ministry as their reminder.

2. God's Word is worth remembering.

In verses 16-18, Peter recalled the "Transfiguration" (see Mt. 17:1-8; Mk. 9:2-8; Lk. 9:28-36). His recollection, however, was selective. [a] He devoted less than a sentence to the stunning transformation of Jesus: "His majesty ... for when He received honor and glory" (vv. 16-17). [b] He did not mention the appearance of Moses and Elijah nor the cloud that shrouded everyone on the "holy mountain" (v. 18).

[c] As one of three "eyewitnesses" (v. 16), Peter quoted what God the Father had said: "This is my beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased" (v. 17). "When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were much afraid" (Mt. 17:6).

Is God a bass or a tenor? Peter's readers did not know. They had missed the "Transfiguration," but possessed the "Scripture" (1:20), a better blessing. Dennis Herrington, Associate Pastor at Morrison Heights Baptist Church, rightly quipped, "If you want to hear God speak, read the Bible out loud!"

The Greek noun, translated "Scripture" or "writing" (depending on context), occurs fifty times in the New Testament. "Scripture" had designated the Old Testament (e.g., Lk. 24:27; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Jas. 2:8), but Peter expanded its definition. In 3:15-16, he grouped Paul's letters with "the rest of the Scriptures."

In verse 20, "prophecy of Scripture" specifically refers to the second division — the other divisions being Torah and Writings — of the Old Testament canon: [a] "Former Prophets" (Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2

Kings) and [b] "Latter Prophets" (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea-Malachi). "Probably no part of Scripture mystifies and frustrates readers more than the prophets" (Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard, Introduction to Biblical Interpretation, 302). False teachers and misinterpretations (see 2:1-3, 9-19; 3:16-17) had prompted Peter to issue a warning: The Word is God's, not ours to warp according to our whims.

Verse 21 compares to 2 Timothy 3:16; unlike "cleverly devised tales" (1:16), "all Scripture is inspired by God." The Greek noun, translated "tales," signified fiction, a "myth" (see 2 Tim. 4:4; Tit. 1:14).

God's Word is "certain" (NIV), reason enough for Peter's readers "to pay attention" (1:19). The Greek verb, translated "pay attention," is a participle, conveying continuous action.

God's Word, like a "lamp" (1:19; Ps. 119:105), shines in a dark world until the Word Himself arrives (Rev. 19:11-13), ending darkness.

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The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

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Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

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All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to crop-

ping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape-, building-, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

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MISSISSIPPI BAPTISTS



1. GAs collected can goods, First Church, Pascagoula



2. Reception for Shurdens, Crestview Church, Petal



3. Groundbreaking Ceremony, Calvary Church, Ellisville



4. wMu and GAs make blankets, First Church, Byram

1. The GAs, grades 3-6, of First Church, Pascagoula, collected canned goods during March to donate to Hope House for needy families at Easter. Shown are the participants.

2. Crestview Church, Petal, held a reception Apr. 1 in honor of pastor Bobby Shurden and his wife Peggy for ten years as pastor.

3. Calvary Church, Ellisville, held groundbreaking ceremonies Apr. 24 for their new sanctuary. Shown are the participants.

4. The wMu and GAs of First Church, Byram, made baby blankets for the Teen Crisis Center. Shown are the participants.

5. Plainway Church, Laurel, celebrated its 57th homecoming Apr. 1, with Danny Henderson, guest speaker. The church presented plaques to several members who have served the church over the years; from left, Vernon Mann, Doris Reeves, Joe Reeves, Ace Heidelberg, Mildred Heidelberg, Ouida Hester, Ellis Hester, Wanda Street, Winston Street, and Howard Smith.

6. Calvary Church, Bogue Chitto, recognized Ivy Gill for 52 years as deacon Apr. 29. Shown are pastor Trent Bilbo, Gill, Udalee Gill, and Joe Waggoner.

7. Andelino, Calixto, Artemio, and Dario Lopez of La Libertad, Huehuetenango, Guatemala, play and sing for the fifth anniversary service of Iglesia Maravillosi Salvador, a new church plant sponsored by Calvary Chapel, Parchman.

8. Eric McMahon, youth and children's pastor, Utica Church, Utica, was ordained to the gospel ministry Jan. 28. Shown are pastor Ben James, Greg Hauss, and McMahon.

9. Cedar View Church, Olive Branch, is hosting a community singing May 19, 6 p.m., featuring the Turner Teenage Bluegrass Gospel Band.

10. First Church, Canton, is hosting a senior adult day May 20. Worship, 9 a.m.; Bible study, 10:15 a.m.; lunch, 11:30 a.m.; concert, 6 p.m. Louis Smith, speaker; Ronnie Cottingham, music.



5. Homecoming, Plainway Church, Laurel



6. Ivy Gill recognized, Calvary Church, Bogue Chitto



7. Fifth Anniversary Service, Iglesia Maravillosi Salvador



8. McMahon ordained, Utica Church, Utica